

The 'Human Touch' Matters

Surveys reveal just how important your position is to your credit union ("Your service can't be beat," 12/05).

Despite predictions that technology-driven channels—automated teller machines (ATM) and online banking—would replace traditional banks, the "human touch" still matters to many consumers, according to surveys by the *American Banker*/Gallup, and by IBT Enterprises, Norcross, Ga., and MCA Works, Westport, Conn.

The IBT/MCA Market Pulse Survey of almost 700 U.S. adults using financial services shows 50% prefer to conduct business face-to-face (branch, in-store branch, and drive-through). Thirty percent prefer to bank online, 18% opt for ATMs, and 2% favor mail or telephone.

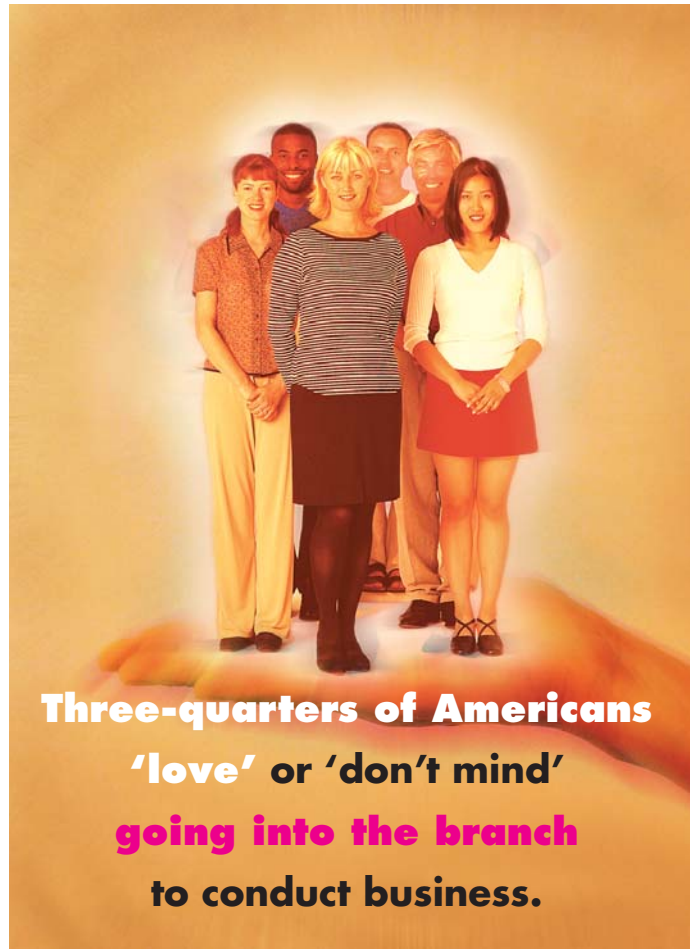
While most U.S. adults use multiple channels to conduct financial transactions (including the stand-alone branch, drive-through windows, in-store banking, online banking, and ATMs),

76% of Americans "love" or "don't mind" going inside the branch to conduct business.

Specifically, the study shows consumers prefer face-to-face interaction with their financial institution representatives for more complex transactions such as deposits (69%), loans (65%), and new accounts (64%). Automated banking (ATM, online, and telephone banking) is most popular for bill paying (64%), cash withdrawal (56%), and funds transfer (54%).

"Savvy banks and credit unions know that having convenient touch points opens greater opportunities to delight consumers and increase their share of consumers' business," says Mylle Mangum, IBT's CEO. "By offering a robust and integrated channel of banking methods, financial institutions are in a better position to solidify their relationships with consumers."

For more information, visit ibtsource.com and select "viewpoint."



**Three-quarters of Americans
'love' or 'don't mind'
going into the branch
to conduct business.**

ABOVE & Beyond

When Adam, a young member of Sky Federal Credit Union, Livingston, Mont., needed a car loan, he worked with Misty Doty, financial service representative at the credit union's Bozeman branch. On subsequent visits to the credit union to make payments, Adam often brought along his black lab, Duke.

When Adam was badly injured in a ski accident and laid up for six to 12 months, he turned to his credit union for help.

Without any family close by, he needed someone to take care of Duke. He thought Misty might be willing to do so because she also had a black lab, Raider.

Not only did Doty agree to watch Duke, but when Adam's co-workers brought Duke to her he was sick, so she took him to the veterinarian.

"Adam cried when he heard how well Doty is caring for his dog," notes Robbie Reinholz, operations manager.

We'd like to share other extraordinary member service stories. Please send yours to cuf frontline@cuna.com.